

DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR APPROPRIATION BILL.

JANUARY 26, 1897.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed.

Mr. HITT, from the Committee on Foreign Affairs submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany H. R. 10134.]

The appropriation bill herewith submitted, providing for the diplomatic and consular service of the United States for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1898, appropriates \$1,676,908.76.

The amount estimated for by the Secretary of the Treasury in the annual estimates of appropriations for the same purpose is \$2,082,728.76.

The amount appropriated by the corresponding bill enacted at the last session of Congress was \$1,643,558.76.

In the details of the estimates of appropriations by the Secretary of the Treasury are various items of increase above the existing law which your committee did not feel at liberty to consider and report in this bill, whatever might be their merit, in view of the second clause of Rule XXI of the House of Representatives that—

No appropriation shall be reported in any general appropriation bill, or be in order as an amendment thereto, for any expenditure not previously authorized by law, unless in continuation of appropriations for such public works and objects as are already in progress; nor shall any provision changing existing law be in order in any general appropriation bill or in any amendment thereto.

In the main, the bill follows, in general and in detail, the diplomatic and consular appropriation act of last year, with certain items of increase and diminution, readily explained.

The legation building at Tokyo, Japan, having been purchased within the year past, the former provision of \$4,000 rent for the building is omitted and a small item of \$250, ground rent, is all that is provided in this bill for that legation.

To meet the share of the United States toward the expense involved in the preparation and publication of the reports, maps, profiles, illustrations, etc., of the Intercontinental Railway Commission and their distribution among the various Governments of America, the sum herein appropriated is but \$10,000, instead of \$15,000, as provided last year.

It was believed that the \$15,000 appropriated last year would secure the completion and publication of the reports, but Mr. A. J. Cassatt, president of the Intercontinental Railway Commission, states it has been found that a longer time is necessary to prepare these reports. and that the reports themselves are more voluminous than an examination of the field data indicated, and \$10,000 more is required as the share of the United States toward the completion of these final reports.

The item of \$2,000 for the subscription of the United States as an adhering member of the International Prison Commission and the expenses of a commissioner is inserted in this bill in continuation of the provision in the sundry civil bill approved June 11, 1896, which provided for the subscription and the appointment of a commissioner to attend the meeting of the International Prison Commission. The commissioner was appointed, and has been discharging his duties under instructions from the Secretary of State. His labors have been given without compensation, and the appropriation is to cover the annual subscription of the United States, \$350, and the necessary expenses incurred in the collection, exchange, and distribution of the valuable information touching the whole subject of prison discipline, treatment, and reform of prisoners. This officer now serves as the medium of communication between the penal administration of the forty-five States and the penal systems and authorities abroad.

An item of \$2,000 is inserted to enable the Secretary of State to keep in repair the legation and consular premises now owned by the United States and occupied by its agents. This provision is made necessary by the fact that the United States has recently come into possession of so many premises by purchase, and instead of the former large appropriations for rent, this small item for repairs is deemed by the Secretary of State to be sufficient.

In place of the consulate-general at Nuevo Laredo, your committee have substituted Monterey, Mexico, which is a much more important locality and better suited for a consulate-general.

Under the law of July 16, 1892, the Secretary of State has estimated for salaries for offices formerly paid by fees, where the fees have become so large that it is advisable to change them from feed to salaried posts.

Of the eight consulates which in the estimates the Department proposes to change from feed to salaried posts, your committee has provided in the accompanying bill for six, to wit:

France:

Grenoble, consul, fees in 1895, \$2,152.50; to be salaried at.....	\$1,500
Calais, consul, fees in 1895, \$2,237; to be salaried at.....	2,000

Germany:

Bamberg, commercial agent, fees in 1895, \$1,842.50; to be salaried at....	1,500
Hanover, consul, fees in 1895, \$2,006.50; to be salaried at.....	1,500
Zittau, agent, fees in 1895, \$2,832; to be salaried at.....	1,500

Great Britain:

Vancouver, British Columbia, consul, fees in 1895, \$1,866; to be salaried at.	1,500
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The salary of the consul at Quebec is made \$2,000 in this bill, or \$500 more than the salary under the present law—an apparent increase. It is in fact, however, a retrenchment, as most of the work which practically devolves on the consul at Quebec is performed by the consular agent situated at Point Levi, opposite Quebec, on the St. Lawrence River, not more than a mile distant from that city, where the fees collected in 1895 amounted to \$2,452.50. It is proposed by the Department to abolish this agency, and as the work of the consul at Quebec will be thereby increased, and at the same time his compensation decreased by the amount he now receives from this agency, it is but just to make his salary \$2,000, a compensation much below what he is now receiving. The item is in the line of retrenchment.

The Department has asked for \$115,000 for contingent expenses of foreign missions, but after a careful examination of the question the committee has fixed the amount at \$110,000.

By the conventions of 1884 and 1889 with Mexico, an International (water) Boundary Commission between the United States and Mexico

was provided, and by the act of March 3, 1893, \$25,000 was appropriated to defray the share of the United States in the expense to be thus incurred. In the prosecution of the labors of the Commission the whole of this sum has been exhausted and the work thereon suspended, and an appropriation of \$10,000 is provided in this bill for the expenses and salaries of the Commission for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1897, to be immediately available; the reason for making it immediately available being the fact that the work of the Commission has been suspended for want of funds, the appropriation of \$25,000 heretofore made having been exhausted in August last.

There is a further item of \$15,000 to enable the Commission to continue its labors under the conventions of 1884 and 1889; this appropriation being for the ensuing fiscal year.

The \$10,000 asked for is to complete work already begun, such as the putting up of monuments on that part of the line agreed upon by the Joint Commission and confirmed by both Governments as the true boundary, and to pay the salaries and expenses of other members of the Commission than Col. Anson Mills, U. S. A., the Commissioner on the part of the United States, who is restricted to his pay and allowance as an army officer, which come from the army appropriation.

The \$15,000 for the ensuing fiscal year is to take up, survey, consider, and determine (and when necessary place monuments to mark the international dividing line) some seven cases of disputes regarding the boundary and unduly projecting jetties in the river, referred to the Commission by the respective Governments under the treaties of 1884 and 1889, without which money this work can not be taken up, although the Mexican Commission is provided with funds and undergoing profitless expenses meanwhile.

The amount appropriated by the diplomatic and consular appropriation bill for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1897, was \$1,643,558.76; the amount appropriated by the bill for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1898, is \$1,676,908.76; a net increase of \$33,350.00.

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